① on page 3

27/9/74

Lost eagles
(worrying Persians)
Scientist & layman &
materia poetica
(layman on radio)
'outside the orbit',
Rounding Oceanus
'six pts off the world'
nine daughters of Aegir
(the ninth wave the
biggest)

p6 Bill Stevenson – astonishingly
successful psychiatric treatment
1946
Normandie 1947

p.4 Fr. Martin Larkin alias
Fr. Dermot Hughes, S.J., M.C.
3-4 'ninth wave'

Ygraine = Eigr.

Die XXVII SEPTEMBRIS
Dies Veneris
anno ab Incarnatione Xti
MCMLXXIV

Dear René

I have just given for posting to you a couple of letters in one large envelope ~~&~~ the second of the two written in disgusting haste as the one person who usually posts my mail was just going off duty and is not here again until Monday & I ~~did not~~ wanted them to go before then. I had time only to glance at the letter & fragments of letters for it came only this morning. Some of yr questions or points made had been dealt with in Letter I enclosed with Letter 2, as we both write down some point raised in a previous letter and, as you say, truly one forgets what one has said and even why one wanted this or that matter made a lot more clear. I personally don't mind this

sort of doubling of matters raised or, for instance, the business of the lost Eagles – mean that you were considering the ~~[illegible]~~ devasting ~~[illegible]~~ loss at ~~[illegible]~~ the hands of the weighty Parthians (no wonder for the ~~word~~ gravibusque) ~~[illegible]~~ – which made me put it in the Tribune's ~~mouth~~ mouth, on page 48 of *The Tribune's Visitation*, ~~[illegible]~~ "whether he face unstable Britain / or the weighty Persians. Truly Persians are not the same as Parthians but both are of the Mespot. context for us of the Middle-Sea. While I was thinking of the Eagles lost by Varus in the Teutoburgerwald in the first decade A.D.

I personally enjoy these matters for one thing I don't think the Carrhae affair – (a proper puzzler as you say) had ever registered in my thick skull, certainly not in ~~relation~~ relation to the great & extremely rich man M. Licinius Crassus who I had actually mentioned in a note to ~~The Narrows~~ The Narrows as the victor in BC 71 of the slave-revolt under Spartacus – I even name him as Praetor for that year and note his exceptional wealth. (Page 16 of Agenda, April 1974.)

I note you refer to Collingwood & Myres vol. in that Oxford series of various periods of the History of Britain. Well yes, I used to read that a great deal in I suppose the 1930s or 1940s can't remember when it first was published, but Collingwood was I suppose the immediate of Haverfield as a 'required work' – for chaps reading Hist. of Brit. of that period. As for A.S. Britain it was Robin Hodgkin's 2 vol Hist of Anglo-Saxon England up to the period of Ælfred of Wessex. That Helen Sutherland gave me for a birthday-present I think. It is a magnificently produced book with marvellous maps. But was superceded by Stenton's work. I never chanced to read Stenton, except in contributions to ~~[illegible]~~ journals. He seemed to me from what little I read of him, to have a very clear & able mind. But of course as archaeological research especially actual field-work the pattern changes – I mean the historians have more & more visible, concrete evidence to draw upon – to interpret. An 'artist' can but rely on what current ~~[illegible]~~ specialist ~~opinion~~ opinion can offer him ~~[illegible]~~ for his materia poetica he must, I think, if he is wise, take what the specialists in this or that discipline with caution – for it is virtually a certainty that the interpretation of new ~~[illegible]~~ archaeological 'finds' will change maybe radically or maybe in some modifying senses. Only the other day I heard a young man speaking on the radio, in the most confident & supercilious manner of 'this rubbish about ~~the fearing~~ early barbarian ~~settlers~~ settlers from over the North Sea avoiding (for fear of ghosts) the burial areas outside the orbit of Roman-British ~~towns~~ towns, and other silly ideas once current among historians & archaeologists." For all I

Yes, got all the stuff about -ingas names & ~~sounds~~ words ending in -ton & the 'thorps' etc. Robin Hodgkin was pretty hot in demarking ~~[illegible]~~ the -ingas names where to be found. Hastingas for example. & -ton & ham-

Yes. whereas one re-reads stuff such as Collingwood about J. Caesar ~~[illegible]~~ expedition the astonishing efficiency & appalling endurance of the Legions strikes one afresh. And much much later in the Roman imperium it's just the same. Sometime in the 360s A.D. when Scotti from Ireland Germanic chiefs from over the north sea & Picts from north east Scotland succeeded in overrunning ~~the~~ most of the Province of Britain but within a few years a Roman General not only rebuilt the broken places but recaptured the actual spoil & many of the citizens – think of the organization & terrific will & determination required & this not half a century ~~or~~ before the Roman West was virtually to collapse –

3

know ~~the~~ 'finds' of archaeology in 1974, may have very likely, indeed
a weathercock, modified the views of ~~of~~ archaeologists & historians
of a little back, it was the confident ~~[illegible]~~ all
Know-all voice ~~that~~ ~~[illegible]~~ I found most objectionable.

Glad you brought out the bit about the 'Master of her'
managing to round Orcinium head-land somehow
& into a head-on wind, — I understood
from book on Nautics that the term 'six points off
the wind" was the absolute minimum required
in such circumstances — with very skilled handling
it was just possible to get just sufficient wind
into the sail — the dread was that the head on wind
veer a fraction more — but no, she backed
& further backed, but 'as that backed that
strengthened' so still great seamanship was
required for the squall turned all the
sea into a swirling race of waters &
so 'spume blind' into the skerry-mill'
For 'skerry-mill' see page 99 The Ana Notes 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5.
The Nordic sea-god Ægir meant 'sea' and
was called by those Scandinavian chaps
'the island mill' because he ceaselessly eroded &
~~was~~ broke down the ~~[illegible]~~ land — the rocks & coastal
areas & islands, He was said to have nine
'daughters' who were the waves that were
the material ~~cause~~ & efficient cause of this
breaking-down action. I wonder if nine
has some echo in the idea that the 'ninth wave'
is thought of as being higher or more
potent than the other waves. When I was a
child on holiday at the sea-~~sh~~side at Deal
or some such place, there was still lingering
some idea that the ninth wave was likely
to ~~[illegible]~~ spray its surf higher — a nurse-maid
old wives tale cf. page 140 of In Parenthesis
... make brats too venturesome flop back with
belly-full & guardian nurse girls squeal.
Amelia's second-best parasol
Sails the raging main
her fine fancy's properly split
she never see that ever
they cut it a bit too fine.
Followed immediately by "and there was
scattering for that maining all over the shop...

I mention this
only because
some people
have thought the
analogy was absurd
To which I could only say
very likely but it was one that
came into my mind at the time
I mean at the time of
the action, July 1916

alias Fr Desmond Hughes SJ. M.C.
that was Fr Martin Larkin's ~~servant~~ batman

that was true enough

... and Ginger O'Hara ~~the~~ ~~Pa~~ padre's bloke* ~~and~~ O the white bodies in the trouble.... The Quarter's knocked-off S.R.D / is blown to buggery / diluted & far fr [illegible]. What won't ~~half~~ get him shirty'*

That was a more generalised truth.

A pretty far-fetched analogy ~~to~~ employ sea-waves coming in on ~~the [illegible]~~ holiday shore & the ebbing of Jerry's gunfire with some more powerful or more accurately fused ~~[illegible]~~ shell smashing Quarter-master Sergeant Evans' store of rum jars – but I've had an affection for the bit* – for it makes a reality ~~with~~ accuracy of ~~what~~ was happening at ~~that time~~ Jerry was withdrawing his guns ~~out~~ a bit, but every now & again he would ~~[illegible]~~ get a heavy burst ~~[illegible]~~ right in on some target a bit too close to be comfortable. And I thought 'O the white bodies in the trouble in conjunct with the name O'Hara evoked 'the Troubles' in its Irish context. – Well, no mention of 'Ninth wave' nevertheless in writing but ~~[illegible]~~ passage I had in mind boiling of the sea when as I've said there was a lingering notion that the 'ninth wave' was like to be a high one.

But considering a very severe hammering of our artillery for over a week & growing to intense 'drum fire' immediately preceding our assault it showed how despite all that, the effect was only partial. Leslie P– was very ~~[illegible]~~ doubtful when we sat on the grassy slope. His point was that the fire power was there alright but had we concentrated on the right targets?

Sorry for all this but in Welsh folk tales (and I expect Irish ones) ~~no doubt English~~ ~~[illegible] I would guess English too [illegible]~~ there is very frequent reference to the 'ninth wave' and I presume this ~~came from or was~~ – derived from the Scandinavian 'nine daughters' of Ægir – was perhaps a part of ~~a~~ common Indo-European mythology (but of that I have no ~~[illegible]~~ evidence) but I do know for certain the 'ninth wave' crops up very often in Welsh materia.

Now, there is a further thing. I don't know how the Nordic Ægir (sea) is pronounced, but in Welsh, apart from Môr (the sea) there is yr eigion direct from Lat. Oceanus but is pronounced (yr (the)) roughly speaking ~~eye-gee-on~~ or using English phonetics eye-gée-on 'g' very hard. accent on middle syllable. Now Arthur's mother is called in Welsh Eigr – ~~[illegible]~~ pronounced ~~[illegible]~~ more or less in English phonetics eye-gr – g hard. gr ~~as~~ as in English 'gr' in say 'grin' or better still ~~in maugre~~ the 'gr' in 'maugre'.

~~Now Eigr was used as a common noun for~~

Now the word eigr, apart from its use as a proper noun or personal name as in the case of Eigr, the mother of Arthur, is also [illegible] use.

common noun, feminine gender, eigr, given in Welsh Dict. as equating with gwyryf, & morwyn (maiden) merch (daughter) geneth (girl) & virgin. In fact the dictionary under eigr gives virgin simply with gwyryf to indicate that it, eigr, can be used with these various meanings. The by far the most usual word in Welsh is morwyn as in the case of Our Lady the form is always as far as I know Mair and Morwyn or in their mutated forms of Fair and Forwyn.

Well, we are dangerous near a meander but it may help to follow the meaning (Page 99 The Ana) of the lines

North by east / over the nine white grinders /
riding the daughters of the queen of islands
Kouroi from over yr eigion (plu. of eigr (ocean)
making Dylan's môr oedd
holding on towards
Igraine's dylanau

Eigr, Arthur's mother became Igraine in 'Romance literature' I suppose because Eigr would hardly be pronounceable by the ~~[illegible]~~ Angevin nobility.

another case of ~~the proper noun~~ common noun dylan meaning wave of the sea, plu. dylanau becoming a personal name Dylan.

I presume the Nordic name for the sea or sea god Ægir with his nine daughters who are the waves that beat ceaselessly on the skerries & rocks by an odd accident appears to be akin ~~to the~~ in sound with the Celtic eigr for Lat Oceanus

~~One would have to learned in etymology & comparative philology in a big way to answer that question [illegible] [illegible] it affords us, however inadvertently, a [illegible] [illegible] not incongruous with the [illegible] western wind tossed changing currents laddery [illegible] shafts of light, the saline his eyes for [illegible] in the West so [illegible] he miles only those [illegible] it all – goes with the intermeddled cenhedloedd and folks et gentes and nations [illegible] & peoples that comprize [illegible] the dapple of us within these insulae from the isles west of Connachta, north to the Orcades & beyond to Thorshavn & [illegible] & south [illegible] riding the Nordmen apart [illegible] the East wheat belt & the Thorpes [illegible] through the Narrows [illegible] [illegible] Môr Iwerddon [illegible] Mare Gallicum [illegible] where Mare Gallicum was written or Iwerddon.~~

~~Anyway~~ –
One would have be a slap-up ~~[illegible]~~ scholar in etymology & comparitive philology & especially in Celtic & Nordic stuff to ~~[illegible]~~ speak of that. But it affords a feeling of affinity.

I ~~don't~~ am not sure that Anlawdd Wledig was the son of Cunedda Wledig – I repeated that in The Sleeping Lord, but I think I misunderstood ~~the~~ matter.

'three leagues & a quarter' would be over nine nautical miles – I think a league is ~~was~~ 3 nautical miles.

Oh there was one thing where you gave me credit where none was due. I did have ~~that~~ Ordnance Survey map, South Sheet, of Britain in the Dark Ages & tried with a pair of dividers to get ~~that~~ bearing 'nor' nor' west a quarter west' accurate as also 'distant three leagues & a quarter' but I expect I got it quite wrong.

Or at least I had the maps when I was in Sheffield Terrace & used the dividers there. that would be in 1946 – ~~but~~ when I went for psychiatric treatment at Bowden House under Bill Stevenson from June 1946 to Christmas of that year & the treatment having been astonishingly successful & I went to Mr Carlile's House Northwick Lodge, & I went through all the stuff written in London during the war & by 1951 The Ana was ready to take to Fabers, but as far as I can remember I did not check up on those bearings.

– written

⑦

about the ~~[illegible]~~ bearing 'nor' nor' west three quarters west' & the distance yet to be covered 'c. 3 leagues & $\frac{1}{4}$.' I may have got that wrong insofar as the ~~vessel~~ ~~was~~ vessel was then supposed to have rounded ~~Otrinum~~ Otrinum, whereas I rather fancy ~~but not sure~~, that my use of a pair of compasses or dividers, was a mistake in Sheffield Terrace & I made a circle in pencil with the steel point of the dividers ~~on~~ a point in the Channel where I reckoned the vessel would be — I used the Dark Age Ordnance ~~Survey~~ map I think for the Roman Britain map was pinned with a lot of drawing-pins on the wall on the ~~[illegible]~~ right side of my bed from the bed's head, – Must stop now.

Monday 30 Sept.

received your letter & Redgauntlet many many thanks,

But one quick answer to one question. The Oak S. Dominic was made at Ditchling of 'bloody damn heart of its own grown' it was, I mean the oak was, given him by George Maxwell's father* I'm giving this to Peter Orr to post for me.

Much love Dear René

Dai

*father-in-law in fact, old Mr Baker (John)